

**APPROVED 11/07/2007**

Present: Charlie Kimball, Chair, Mike Nygren, Andy Kohlhofer, Peter Bearse, Doug McElroy, Peg Pinkham, Donald Gates, Jr., Members of the Parks & Recreation Commission Jon Benson and Renee King, Town Administrator Heidi Carlson and Recording Secretary Kathy Arsenault.

Charlie Kimball called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

The minutes from the October 24, 2007 meeting were reviewed. Some changes were requested and a motion to accept the minutes as amended was made by Andy Kohlhofer and seconded by Doug McElroy. The vote was passed to accept the minutes as amended.

The Fremont Parks & Recreation were in attendance to present their budget proposal. Members Jon Benson and Renee King began the presentation. Proposals were passed amongst the Committee for those who did not have the copy from two weeks ago.

Charlie Kimball asked for introductions around the table.

Renee King stated that the projected budget is about \$8,000 more than last year mainly due to the fields. She explained how Camp Fremont works stating that it is a structured program, and that they have received wonderful, positive feedback. They have a wonderful director. They had some new staff this past summer, they tightened things up a bit and it made a huge difference this summer. Peg Pinkham stated that this program is a great opportunity for some families that wouldn't be able to have a program like this for their children otherwise. It is a safe place for children right here in Fremont. Peg mentioned that some other towns experienced the highest reported requests for school children and programs like this. Renee King noted that yes; they too have higher numbers this year for the program.

Field Maintenance – Jon Benson mentioned that the field is getting older now; they have track issues and grading. He added that most of the budget is in this area

Administration remains the same.

Town Events – Jon Benson said that they are trying to get a band for this spring. They are trying to have activities for older residents and teens. A lot is focused on children. Jon Benson stated they are trying to get an all around Parks & Rec. for all ages. Charlie Kimball stated that last year this line was \$5500 now you are asking for \$5100. Andy Kohlhofer questioned why they have always been under spending and asked what happened. Jon Benson replied that this year we would like to have a band. Last year we did it too late, and we are looking into booking now for the upcoming year and to jump ahead and get the band. Peter Bearse asked how much of the appropriation can you anticipate for the band, Benson replied about \$3000. He added that they are trying to have a movie night. The association is trying to include the ages of 20 and above.

Andy Kohlhofer questioned about the wages, Renee King replied that the wages are based on having the ratio of 6 to 1. Renee added that it is on average about 30 kids per week for six weeks. Andy Kohlhofer asked about budgeting for 50 children, Peg Pinkham said that is because it spikes from one year to the next. Jon Benson added that they plan in case it happens, but they

have to initially ask for it. Peg Pinkham asked if the staff is aware of the process. Renee King said yes and that there is a more involved interviewing process this year. The staff is well aware that we tightened up last year and it ran more efficiently. They are all pleased. They anticipate a high number next year with 4 first grades currently at the school. They do not accept kindergarten aged kids. They have to have completed 1<sup>st</sup> grade to be eligible to enroll in Camp Fremont.

Doug McElroy asked how much more is the anticipated budget for this year. Jon Benson said that it is more on the field side this year due to washout, etc. Peg Pinkham stated they were \$4000 off and do they anticipate \$4800-\$4900. Jon Benson said yes, we are going to spend another \$5000 through the end of the year. Renee King added that they still have the Christmas tree lighting, candy for the Santa parade, etc, and all of this is still to come.

Peter Bearse mentioned field maintenance and that there is still a big jump from 2007 money spent. Mike Nygren noted that there had been a \$6000 cut in field maintenance from 2006. Jon Benson replied that in 2006 he asked for the money for the new basketball court and it got done sooner than expected. He added that they are asking for more this year because there is a drainage problem at the ball fields, the softball infield, and that they spent money unexpectedly on the Babe-Ruth field. Renee King stated that it was important to bring to the frontline that the biggest complaint is from the women who use the track for walking, it is mushy and having trouble with drainage. Jon Benson added that the water is coming off the ball fields. The water comes off the soccer field right into track. They are meeting with the town engineer on Friday for suggestions.

Jon Benson suggested that the \$5000 may not be enough, but they need at least that. We may have to come back next year. Jon Benson stated that it is a rough guess estimate at \$5000, and hopefully that will do it. Peg Pinkham asked if they still get any contributing funds from the FAA. Jon noted that no, but that they tend to take care of other things, more sports related like the dugouts, etc.

Peter Bearse stated that he loved the idea of a band. He added that he is curious about local talent. He raised the question of bringing in local talent, taping events and then selling the tapes in an effort to get money back. Renee King stated that we are trying to appease a large crowd. Jon Benson added that we tried that before asking for \$500, and that was just enough to cover travel. We want someone who is good, so people will come back the next year. Discussion continued regarding getting a band for next spring looking into local talent, volunteers, National Guard performances, etc. Jon Benson and Renee King will take this into consideration.

Andy Kohlhofer mentioned that ground maintenance increased about \$5400. Jon Benson stated that there are building repairs and that they are constantly repairing due to vandalism. Jon added that they are requesting \$500 for building repairs, \$2400 for foul ball poles, dugout renovation at \$1000 in the Babe Ruth field, and \$4000 for the softball infield renovation, equaling \$7900. Andy Kohlhofer asked about mowing and labor. Jon Benson said that it didn't go up, that we just combined the two into field maintenance. Andy Kohlhofer asked about the septic and whether or not it is pumped every year. Jon Benson stated that last year it was done twice, and

that it needs to be done at least once per year. Discussion continued regarding field usage during field day, games, etc, causing a greater need for septic pumping.

Andy Kohlhofer asked if this goes out for bid. Jon Benson replied that no we never have, we use an in town business, Delahunty Septic. He added that they could, but they have always used local.

Mike Nygren asked what the tractor is used for. Jon Benson stated that it is used for hauling fertilizer, mowing, etc. He added that it keeps busy, and that it is out of warranty this year. They are anticipating that things are going to happen with it. Doug McElroy asked about the fertilizer and if that is based on last years price. Jon Benson stated that it is based in part on last year price and that there is a grub problem. The price of fertilizer is going up and they are aware of that. Doug McElroy added that he knows what it cost his business and that the price for fertilizer has gone up tremendously. Jon Benson added that oil changes have been covered under warranty, but that the warranty is up. It was discussed amongst the table about the John Deer tractor, the number of hours on it and that it has been taken good care of. Jon Benson added that in the summer it is being used at least twice a week to mow the fields.

Peter Bearse asked what the reason was for the jump in the electricity, with the request being higher than what was spent last year. Jon Benson replied that we are asking for 200 more this year. As the concession stand gets more settled, they get more equipment, such as a new freezer for the FAA. Jon added that the FAA is charged \$25 per week for this usage during the season. Jon Benson added that it doesn't cover all of it, but that the FAA gives back to the town in other ways.

Peg Pinkham mentioned that two new ball fields that got approved at the school. Andy Kohlhofer asked where they are located. Peg Pinkham said that they would be located at the backside of the school. Some discussion regarding these ball fields and backstops and location continued.

Peter Bearse asked about the revenues and how are they used. The money from the summer programs do they use it for offsetting or does it go back in the general fund. Renee King replied that it goes it goes back into the general fund. Peter Bearse asked do you have a dedicated fund, like an enterprise fund. Renee King replied that they don't have a fund like that. Renee King also stated that it would be nice to have the summer program be self-sustaining, but that type of fund would have to go before the voters, if they want it. She added that they would have to hike up the enrollment cost. Renee King stated that yes, it does cost the town money to run this program, but it is a safe place and gets the kids off the streets for 6 weeks. Jon Benson added that the Budget Committee wanted us to try years ago to make it run itself, it didn't happen. Renee King added that surveys were sent out to parents and that even at \$100/week they were pleased with the program and the price. Peg Pinkham added that they are right in line with what the surrounding communities are getting for similar programs adding that the point is that the kids that need to go this program are the ones benefiting from it. Andy Kohlhofer asked about on average is it about 30 kids a week. Renee King said that yes it is.

Discussion began regarding the programs and how it differs from week to week, how parents can pick and choose what weeks they want, field trip locations, etc. Andy Kohlhofer asked if they

ever combine field trips with other towns, Renee King stated that no, but they allow parents to go as chaperones to fill the bus, and the parents would have to pay at the door. Andy Kohlhofer questioned about the salaried staff and are they covered by the town, Donald Gates, Jr. said that yes, they are covered through the town. Renee King added that they are all CPR certified. Donald Gates, Jr. added that the Police Dept. does background checks on all of the staff. Andy Kohlhofer asked if the salaried positions include workers compensation, and withholdings, Donald Gates, Jr. said that yes that is all done through the town as town employees.

Peter Bearse mentioned to the Parks & Recreation that we have a Cable access channel, if they would be interested in using it. Andy Kohlhofer suggested taping some events, then bring the tapes to Comcast and they will play it. Renee King responded that she thinks that will be fabulous for Camp Fremont. Andy Kohlhofer added that it is available now for school events, camp for the kids, etc. Peg Pinkham said that it has to be a public announced event and to be careful of that. Renee King will look into, being aware that parents would have to sign release forms.

With no further questions, Charlie Kimball thanked the Parks & Recreation for coming. Jon Benson and Renee King left the meeting at 8:07 pm.

Heidi Carlson, Town Administrator, passed around budget proposals for the Executive Budget and Planning and Zoning.

Charlie Kimball noted that if a board member is related to an employee, when it comes to raises, that member of the board needs to abstain. He added that the 3% does not count; it is when they are going to up the pay by a step increase. Mike Nygren discussed the hiring of employees and step raises with regard to the wage matrix. He also added that a COLA is not something the town is required to give, but that they can give it out of the goodness of the town's heart. Heidi Carlson stated that the town doesn't hire employees based on the matrix. Mike Nygren said yes, but you are asking employees for their input and setting salaries on it. He added that the 3% is for good will, not necessarily part of the paycheck.

Heidi Carlson continued with the budget stating that the increase in wages in the executive budget in the selectmen's office is at the 3%. She noted that the Town Clerk's part of this is not completed yet. The Town Clerk needed to make some changes, and is looking into pricing of a new computer and software maintenance.

Heidi Carlson stated that they are up 3% on last year's numbers. She added that there are not many changes, but that dues and conferences are up. She said that she would like some flexibility there. Jeanne Nygren has attended some ½ day and full day training seminars and Heidi would like to have the availability to do that more. The newsletter cost is up. Heidi stated that it is up \$100. The newsletter has increased from \$190 per month for postage to now \$285. Andy Kohlhofer stated that the population hasn't changed that much. Heidi said no, but that it is based on the number of households. There are approximately 1550 households, including P.O. boxes.

Heidi Carlson stated that there was one item pending and that was the copy machine. The office is having more trouble than what is considered reasonable. Andy Kohlhofer asked about what the service agreements were. Heidi Carlson stated that there are 2 service agreements, one for the copy machine and one for the accounting software. Charlie Kimball asked how many copiers do we have total. Heidi Carlson replied that Fire Department, Police Department, Selectmen's Office, the Town Clerk (which is really just a printer), and the Library. Charlie Kimball asked if it was possible to get a contract for all of them at the same time. Heidi didn't think so. The Police Dept. is proposing in their budget to lease one, costing about \$1900 annually, and covering everything except paper. Charlie Kimball asked if it was possible to look into it. Heidi stated that she could look into it. A discussion regarding copiers, collating features, volume, and color printing continued.

Peter Bearse continued back with the budget asking if a 3% increase was built into these figures. Heidi Carlson stated yes. Donald Gates, Jr. added that that was a decision made by the Selectmen that a 3% COLA was given last year. Charlie Kimball stated that last year the standard COLA was at 2.8%, and yet we gave 3%. Heidi Carlson added that with regard to Jeanne Nygren, it is not based on 3% of last year's numbers. Jeanne has added responsibility and this has created a change in her job description. She also budgets Jeanne at about 30 hours/week even though she works about 25 hours/week. This is so Jeanne can cover during Heidi's absence during meetings, vacations, sick time, etc.

A discussion regarding sick days, personal days and vacation time took place.

Peter Bearse asked when the last time a stipend for the selectmen was increased. Charlie Kimball believed it was several years ago. It was decided at that time to raise it based on what the school board was getting, figuring in the amount of meetings they attend, as well as meetings on different boards.

Peter Bearse asked as to when we were going to have the figures for the Town Clerk. Heidi stated that she has most of them with the exception of the wages and the computer. Andy Kohlhofer asked if the Town Clerk has met with the Selectmen yet. Donald Gates, Jr. said that no, not yet. Heidi stated that the wages are blank and she then continued to read the numbers aloud for the items she did have. Heidi also mentioned that there was a change for the computer because the Town Clerk's computer isn't any good and she is looking into pricing for a new one.

Peter Bearse noted the motor vehicle/registration revenues, and questioned as to how much of that total does the town get. Heidi Carlson replied that the town receives all of it. She added that other than property taxes, it is the single highest revenue, directly deposited to the town. Mike Nygren asked what lines do they represent. Heidi Carlson stated that the revenue is based on the town portion of what it costs you to register your vehicle. Heidi clarified that the state fees, which did increase this year, go directly to the State. The additional fee of \$2.50 for receiving your decals from the town also goes directly to the town's revenue.

Heidi Carlson moved on to Planning and Zoning. She noted that in the budget there is 3% increase for wages, adding that this is a full time clerical position. She also stated that this position has been full time for more than one year, this is the second year. She added that this is

full time, but that the hours vary due to a variety of nightly meetings. Discussion regarding postage and advertising began. It was noted that in previous years, primarily 2004/2005 a higher dollar amount was spent than in recent years. Doug McElroy stated that in 2004 they overspent on postage and advertising. Peter Bearse noted that e-mail is replacing a great deal of postage costs. Heidi Carlson also noted that those were the last really busy years in this area. She added that a great deal of minutes no longer get mailed, they are now e-mailed. Peter Bearse asked about a change in matching grants, and Heidi Carlson replied that they are the same; they just haven't spent it yet this year. She added that we have to have the funds if a grant becomes available, because if we didn't have the money, we wouldn't get the grant. Peter Bearse asked about a community development block grant in the overall picture. Heidi responded that there isn't one currently.

Andy Kohlhofer asked about professional services and why it doubled from 2006 to 2007, also asking if it is due to the master plan. Heidi Carlson stated that is part to the Master Plan, adding it is something that we have to pay for up front. Peter Bearse asked about David West, budgeted down below. Heidi stated that that is for planning services, phone calls, meetings, etc., adding that it is usually David West, but it could include someone else. She added that the draft of this was just posted with a public hearing about a month ago. They are working on a lot of zoning changes this year. She added that the Conservation Commission funded a study of 57 wetlands and they are proposing 26 of them to be designated as prime wetlands (which is a zoning change proposal). These do not have a lot cost to them other than Planning Board review. Heidi Carlson said that the advertising monies come back to town if there are applications. The applicants reimburse the fees for mileage to Brentwood for recordings, registry fees, etc.

Heidi Carlson said that there is an increase in seminars, training & conferences. Adding now that she has been full time, Meredith would like to take advantage of these being offered, and it doesn't cost a lot. Peg Pinkham noted that the standard for mileage reimbursement is 48.5 cents/mile. Heidi Carlson said they are aware of that, but the town has only adjusted this rate every few years. Mileage currently is reimbursed at 44 cents/mile.

Discussion regarding printing of the Master Plan and the circuit rider planner contract took place. Peter Bearse asked if part of the \$2500 is covered through a matching grant arrangement. Heidi Carlson stated that there are additional services on top of this such as Planning Board meetings, telephone calls, etc. none of which are covered by matching grants. She added that David West is the one working on that. She stated that some of the revenue numbers are not in there yet, adding that last year we had more building permits. Heidi stated that they are down about \$26,000 to date, but not down as much as they thought it would be.

Peg Pinkham shared with the Committee a document from Peter Bearse regarding a grant for the school, which the School Board is taking an active approach on. She thanked Peter for forwarding to the School Board. Peg Pinkham will head up writing the grant. Heidi Carlson has forwarded other Safe Routes to School information materials to the School as well.

Peter Bearse referred to the clerical line, and Heidi Carlson reminded that these numbers are year to date expenses. Peter asked about the revenues for the Planning Board fees, and would the Board of Selectmen have to approve them. Heidi Carlson stated that there is a fee schedule

hearing, but that no, the Selectmen do not have to approve it, the Planning Board sets their own fees.

Peg Pinkham stated that she did bring up to the School Board the date of December 8, for the meeting with the Budget Committee. She has requested the budget completion to be targeted for the 28<sup>th</sup> of November. They are working hard on it and they have added 3 more sessions, so that they can come in on target. Andy Kohlhofer asked Peg Pinkham is there any way to get the RSAs regarding schools and education. Peg Pinkham replied that you can go the NH School Board's website. (NHSBA) Peg Pinkham added that if you have a particular request, e-mail it to her and that she then e-mails it directly to their legal department. Peg Pinkham stated that if you have questions or need clarifications regarding the SAU budget that you could also contact Annmarie Scribner.

Andy Kohlhofer asked if we calculate accrued vacation time or pensions, and Heidi Carlson stated that no we do not have pension plans, aside from the NH Retirement System for police officers. Other full-time employees do get up to a 3% match on retirement, but it is not a structured plan like NHRS. Mike Nygren noted that the Police Department does. Heidi Carlson replied that that is in their payout and is not according to town contributions. A general discussion regarding accrued vacation time and pensions continued.

Heidi Carlson revisited some questions from last week.

Regarding the Fire Department question about points (4220) Thom Roy does the Fire Department points plan and he estimates it at 2-4 hours of work per week. (Stipend) The secretary does not do either of the point's plans administration.

Regarding the Health Officer (4415) She spends about 10½ hours/week performing her duties. These duties include checking and/or testing on; housing standards, septic, health inspections, condemnations, daycares, foster homes, eating establishments, mosquitoes, EEE, water, dead birds, schools, lead, asbestos, watersheds, wetlands, dam and water issues. She is also reads a lot of email and correspondence. Peter Bearse noted that she does all of this for only \$1,200 per year. Heidi Carlson responded yes, it is an annual stipend. Andy Kohlhofer asked about Section 8 housing and do they have that here, and if so, is it through the Health Officer. Heidi Carlson responded that she doesn't believe we have any Section 8 here in Fremont, but that it is possible people could potentially have the Section 8 voucher, used toward rent in Fremont. Andy Kohlhofer asked if we give out certificates of occupancy for apartments. Heidi Carlson said that yes, if they get a permit for a legal apartment.

Peter Bearse asked to propose 2 questions for the agenda for the next meeting. With regards to the tax bills; could this committee recommend to the Board of Selectmen that everyone have the opportunity to pay their taxes quarterly. Peter Bearse stated that many towns have the option to pay quarterly. Heidi Carlson mentioned that it has been awhile since it has come up at town meeting. One member said that it would have to be voted on at town meeting. Heidi Carlson stated that it costs more money for tax bills 4 times per year and for postage 4 times per year, and it is a balancing act between those costs and any reduction in cost of borrowing money in anticipation of taxes. Peter Bearse stated that he asked about this as an option, not as a

requirement. Charlie Kimball said that people can pay it anyway they want. Donald Gates, Jr. suggested that maybe we should advertise that so that people are aware. Andy Kohlhofer stated that when the Tax Collector's Office comes in, he would like to see what the delinquency rate is, just to compare to previously going up about 5 to 6 % per year. Carlson indicated this is available in the Tax Collector's year end report in the Annual Town Report.

Peter Bearse stated that it seems there is a levy applied to senior citizens and that some would say why should we have to pay the full amount of the school portion. Peg Pinkham said that somebody had to pay for them. Peter Bearse stated that he just wants people to start thinking about senior citizens, and can they continue to live in this community. Heidi Carlson stated that the town does have Elderly Exemptions. Peter Bearse asked if that is all Fremont has to offer. Andy Kohlhofer said that as a Budget Committee we are here to recommend and that we are here to have a budget that people can afford. Donald Gates, Jr. added that it is about finding a balance. Doug McElroy stated yes, it is about the town's/school district's wants and needs.

Peter Bearse stated in recapping #1 needs to be advertised and #2 is out of our hands. Peg Pinkham said that the federal law states you have to provide a public education and the state laws dictate how we fund it. Peg Pinkham asked if the committee had anything they wanted her to share with the school board before we both meet. Peter Bearse asked are you budgeting to hire an architect for the planning of a new school. Peg Pinkham said don't believe everything you read in the paper. Peter Bearse began reading aloud from a newspaper article. Peg Pinkham stated that this article isn't about the Fremont School Board; this is the District's Long-Range Planning Committee. Peg Pinkham added that this is an independent committee. Andy Kohlhofer mentioned a meeting he went to at Black Rocks Village and no one was there, asking if these meetings need to be posted. Heidi Carlson stated that they are posted on the town's website. Peter Bearse asked about the independent committee and who is on it. Peg Pinkham stated that they are looking for new members, suggesting calling Jason Schreiber who can provide more information. Discussion regarding this newspaper article continued.

Peter Bearse asked again are you budgeting for an architect at this time. Peg Pinkham responded no, not that I know of at this time. She added that we do the budget department by department and we are still in the initial stages of that. Peter Bearse added that he has a great concern for the public's right to know.

With nothing further to discuss, Andy Kohlhofer motioned to adjourn, Doug McElroy seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:29 pm. The next scheduled meeting of the Budget Committee is Wednesday, November 7, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Arsenault  
Recording Secretary